

The Church Journal

AND

GOSPEL MESSENGER.

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THE ILLINOIS ELECTION.

The Diocese of Illinois has seen fit again to throw a solemn responsibility upon the general Church. She does so also with a rebuke upon her lips to that general Church, for having before exercised a canonical right, and performed a canonical duty, in a way that did not please Illinois. She does more; she comes with the name of her candidate and tells the Church beforehand that it has no business but to accept him, that "the consent of the Standing Committees" canonically required, means only that the Standing Committees are to register the acts of the Diocesan Convention of Illinois!

We dwell not on the fact that the *canons* of the Diocese were stretched to their utmost tension to allow the votes of certain clergymen whose *ordinations* even were within the time of the actual *residence* required by canon as clergymen; nor on the other fact that the *Constitution* appears to have been disregarded in giving a seat to the very gentleman who engineered through the extraordinary interpretation which admitted these clergymen, and that it was his vote and that of another in the same condition which gave the Elect the one lay majority which elected him. We pass by the rulings which forbade protests, and went all one way, and the appointment of a one-sided partisan committee to draw up the rebuke to the House of Deputies, and the snub beforehand to the Standing Committees.

The minority seem to have had no rights which the majority (and that a bare majority of doubtful constitutionality) were bound to respect. Legal matters (and they have been prominent matters in Illinois,) have not been so well ordered there, as the outcome shows, as to give unshaken confidence to Illinois interpretations of canon law.

But setting all aside, we cannot say we are sorry that a fair and square issue has, by the action of the Diocese, been placed before the Church.

It was hoped that the last Convention had settled the tone and status for us for some time to come. The Church was prepared quietly to accept the settlement, and turn to her work. Illinois has seen fit—or the majority there—to unsettle the whole matter; to disturb the calm of Lent with questions of law and canon, and suspicious doctrine, and to rebuke the Church of which the Diocese is a member.

But there is this satisfaction, that the issue now is clear. In declining to sign the testimonials of Dr. Seymour, the House of Deputies had only to go upon deductions. Dr. Seymour had published nothing. There were no writings of his which stated his doctrine. It was, of course, after all, of *nocturnal* origin.

In the present case there is nothing doubtful. The question is one wholly of doctrine. Apart from that, one may concede, while smiling at the very extravagant language of his eulogists in the Convention and out of it, that there are many traits in the Elect's character which would be useful in the Episcopate.

The question, fortunately, is freed from all complications of a personal sort. It is the bare, bald question of doctrine, avowed, maintained, defended; pressed on occasion as fit and unfit, in private and in public, in pamphlets, speeches, sermons, and on the floor of Convention, wherever a hearing can be obtained; boldly sometimes, and boldly in its offensive nakedness; plausibly and subtly, when that seemed best; but always pressed as the one Gospel which the Elect of Illinois has seemed to think he was sent to preach to a Church which has forgotten it.

It is not that he holds it as a speculative opinion. He holds it with the almost fanatical intensity of a propagandist, and while pressing it on the young who are under his control in the confessional or the school, presses it equally in season and out of season, so that it is noticeable that, let the text be what it will, the sermon always comes round to the Eucharist and the preacher's views about it.

The General Convention just risen declined to allow the consecration of a man suspected of holding Eucharistic Adoration. It passed a canon with almost entire unanimity condemning such adoration.

For the champion of that adoration, in one bold, unhesitating, able and fanatical defender, who has plausibly explained, and subtly reasoned, but who has never taken back the deliberate utterance flung as a challenge in the hall of the Convention three years ago, Illinois now asks a miracle! Can the Church afford to stultify herself to her own children and the community, by granting the request? Can she afford to say and unsay, play

fast and loose with human consciences and her own moral sense and consistency, at the bidding of men who are determined to drive everything to extremes?

In 1871 the House of Bishops, to a Church distracted by these questions, issued a *Pastoral*, as usual. It was said to have been written by the Bishop of Albany—high enough surely for the highest Churchman. At all events, like all *Pastorals*, it was the unanimous utterance of our Chief Shepherds. In that *Pastoral* of the doctrine of Eucharistic Adoration we read:

The doctrine which chiefly attempts, as yet, to express itself by ritual in questionable and dangerous ways, is connected with the Holy Eucharist. That doctrine is, emphatically, a *novelty in theology*. What is known as "Eucharistic Adoration" is undoubtedly inculcated and encouraged by that ritual of posture lately introduced among us, which finds no warrant in our "Office for the Administration of the Holy Communion."

Although men may, by *unlawful reasoning on Divine mysteries*, argue themselves into an acceptance both of the practice and the doctrine which it implies, these are most certainly *unauthorized by Holy Scripture*, entirely aside from the purposes for which the Holy Sacrament was instituted, and most dangerous in their tendencies. To argue that the spiritual presence of our dear Lord in the Holy Communion, for the nurture of the faithful, is such a presence as allows worship to Him thus and there present, is, to say the very least, to be wise above that which is written in God's Holy Word. For the objects of this Holy Sacrament as therein revealed, are, first, the memorial before God of the One Sacrifice for sins forever; and secondly, the strengthening and refreshing of the souls of the faithful. Moreover, no one can fail to see that it is impossible for the common mind to draw the line between the worship of such an undefined and mysterious presence, and the awful error of adoring the elements themselves. Wherefore, if a teacher suggests this error by act or posture, he places himself in antagonism to the doctrine of this Church and the teaching of God's Word, and puts in peril the souls of men. In the presence, therefore, of this danger, we call upon the ministers and members of the Church to bear in mind, that while they should always cherish and exhibit that true and genuine reverence which devoutly recognizes "the dignity of the Holy Mystery, and the great peril of the unworthy receiving thereof," yet it is the bounden duty of each one to deny himself the outward expression of what to him may be only reverence, if that expression even seems to inculcate and encourage superstition and idolatry.

The Elect of Illinois is the zealous, avowed, and almost fanatical champion of this very Adoration, which the Bishops say "puts in peril the souls of men."

In the same *Pastoral*, speaking of the Confessional, the entire American Episcopacy declares

The Church permits, and offers to her children, the opening of their griefs in private to some minister of God's Word. But she does not make this the first resort; she does not provide for its frequent recurrence or uniform practice; she does not impose it by ecclesiastical ordinance; she does not hold or declare it necessary for the forgiveness of sins, or for the attainment of high degrees of spiritual advancement; nor does she connect with it blessings which can be secured only by its observance. She simply offers and commends this privilege to those of her children who cannot quiet their own consciences by self-examination, immediate confession to God, with faith in Christ, repentance, and restitution. Wherefore, to make this seeking of comfort and counsel not exceptional, but customary; not free, but enforced (if not by actual law, at least by moral obligation and spiritual necessities), is to rob Christ's provision of its mercy, and to change it into an engine of oppression and a source of corruption. History demonstrates this. The experience of families, and even of nations, shows that the worst practical evils are inseparable from this great abuse. To pervert the godly counsel and advice which may quiet a disturbed conscience, into the arbitrary direction which supplants the conscience, is to do away with that sense of moral responsibility under which every man "shall give account of himself to God."

The Elect of Illinois habitually hears confession, and uses his position to make it ordinary and customary among those under his charge. He defends it, advocates it, and encourages in all ways in his power its practice. He put himself squarely on the record in this respect in his speech before the Council of Wisconsin, when he was a candidate for the Episcopate in that Diocese. The Confessional with him is not to be excused, but to be defended and propagated.

The *Pastoral* goes on to speak of books, and especially Books of Devotion, and makes this declaration:

As fostering tendencies, of which we regret to see any tokens among us, we must not fail to point out the dangers arising from devotional and doctrinal books, alien in their character to the whole spirit of our Liturgy, which have of late years been insidiously multiplied in England and America. Such works are chiefly borrowed from sources confessedly hostile to our communion, and tend only to weaken and undermine the loyalty of our people, and especially of our youth, to the primitive faith and worship of our Church. Moreover, let it be borne in mind that the rich treasury of our own devotional authors is full of all things that minister to edification; while the inspired Psalter, and other Holy Scriptures, too little studied by most of us in this age of hurry and unrest, leave wholly without excuse this disposition to seek such aids to devotion as we here pointedly condemn.

The books just mentioned are not the only ones against which our people must be warned. Publications are scattered through our parishes, the whole aim of which is to undermine the legitimate authority of the Chief Pastors of the Church, to inculcate irreverence, to stir up strife, to excite suspicion, to advocate "the factious maintenance of groundless opinions," and to lead to division and to schism. It was the solemn counsel of St. Paul "to mark those that cause divisions" in the Church, and to avoid them and their teaching.

The Elect of Illinois makes no concealment of the circulation and defence of books which contain invocations of the Saints, preparations and forms for Sacramental Confession. Books "alien to the whole spirit of our Liturgy," he both distributes and has defended in public prints,

The issue is thus fairly before the Church. Can our Bishops afford, by accepting the choice of Illinois, to stultify their deliberate solemn warnings, to play fast and loose with the consciences they have undertaken to guide, and for which before God they are responsible, and to overturn all confidence in their own consistency and in the fixity of their own convictions?

Can the Standing Committees ask them to do so? Can they propose to them such deliberate self-contradiction? We put the matter plainly. There is here no question of character. The question is of doctrine. It is whether the Church knows her own mind from year's end to year's end, whether her most solemn utterances are anything but idle breath, whether she knows her own meaning and purposes, and has any hand upon her own helm?

There is but one word that needs a reply. It is said the Church has no right to object against a candidate for the Episcopacy what she tolerates in a priest.

The reply is that there is not a Diocese in which the open avowals on record of the Elect of Illinois would not be a bar against the ordination of any deacon or any priest. The Elect himself, had he avowed such views at the time of his ordination to the Priesthood in Wisconsin, would not have "passed" his examiners, nor would the hands of Kemper have given him his Commission. Has the Church changed, or has he? It is one thing to mercifully decline to prosecute, another thing to elevate to the Episcopacy, and so subscribe to the doctrines of one against whose views the unanimous Episcopate and the whole Church bears testimony.

We make no apology for fulfilling our duty as Church Journalists. It is a disagreeable one, and one from which flesh and blood shrink. Could we have followed our own wish, we would long since have been out of the necessity. But Divine Providence has ruled it otherwise.

The Church's Lent has been rudely invaded by the sharp challenge of Illinois, the flat defiance, and the summons to answer in Chicago for her actions in St. John's chapel last October. She might have been spared this. But it is not the Church's fault that she must stand for consistency, truth, and peace, in Lent as at all times.

That the Church desires to do everything possible for the Diocese, is very certain. She has had a tender feeling toward Illinois since the necessary disappointment last Autumn. It is a matter of intense regret that Illinois has replied to that feeling by a challenge which is almost a threat.

There never was so solemn an issue laid before the Church. Personal feelings must be put out of the question. The matter must be decided prayerfully and in the sight of God, as responsible to Him alone, and not to any man or any Diocese. On its decision rests the future well-being, not of the Church in Illinois, but of the Church in this whole land for years to come. Let us all carry it on our hearts to the altar, in these days of penitence and prayer.

DR. HAWKS ON THE QUESTION OF TO-DAY.

In the course of our American Church history, four persons, who have by Diocesan Conventions been chosen for the office of Bishop, have failed to obtain the sanction of Standing Committees, or House of Clerical and Lay Deputies.

In all the history of these transactions, never once has the right of rejection been questioned until within the last twelve months. And now we are coolly informed that the General Convention or Standing Committees have no right to reject the papers—they must pass them, and that such was the intention of the law-makers.

We turn to Dr. Hawks' work on the Constitution and Canons of the Church in the United States. It will probably not be thought too much to assert that he knew something about the laws of the Church, and the intentions of the law-makers—possibly as much as some, who as canonists, are not quite as widely known as he.

In giving the history of the Constitution, he sums up seven particulars retained by each Diocese under the Constitution, and five points surrendered by the Dioceses when they adopted the Constitution of the American Church. Among the rights which he says the Dioceses very clearly retained was "2, to elect their own Bishop." Under the question "What did they surrender?" he replies

"2. They surrendered the right of having the Bishop whom they might elect, consecrated without the assent of the Church at large."

Before proceeding further with this subject, in view of a threat uttered at the late Illinois Convention, we quote another passage under this same head. Dr. Hawks places it first. The Dioceses surrendered

"1. Such exercise of independency as would permit them to withdraw from the union at their own pleasure, and without the assent of the other Dioceses."—*Contributions*, &c., pp. 9, 10.

In commenting upon the provisions for confirming the choice made by the Diocese, he says, after describing the